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FIRST COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR MOROCCO (1997-2001)

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INTRODUCTION

1. The first country cooperation framework for Morocco, for the period from 1997 to 2001, is the result of a continuous process of consultations between the Government, UNDP, non-governmental organizations and various other donors. Having begun with the mid-term review, the process continued, from a sustainable human development perspective, with the preparation of the country strategy note and the advisory note.

I. DEVELOPMENT SITUATION FROM A SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

A. Socio-economic situation and trends

2. Thanks to a structural adjustment programme begun in 1983, the Moroccan economy opened up externally and became more responsive to market forces. The resulting confidence in the economy's adaptability led to the decision, in 1994, to take up the challenge of full integration into the world economy by the year 2010. This transitional phase has not, however, seen similar improvements in the area of human development, where progress has been slow; to some extent, this has contributed to the country's difficulties in maintaining durable growth (the yearly average from 1991 to 1996 was 1.5 per cent, compared with 4 per cent between 1983 and 1990). Social indicators are below average levels for developing countries; in 1993, Morocco was in 88th position in terms of its gross domestic product per capita, but only in 123rd place in terms of the human development index (Human Development Report 1996). That gap, reflecting the major disparities in development between urban and rural areas and between regions and gender groups, suggests that Morocco has enough resources to make a significant improvement in its human development performance within a reasonable period. For that to be achieved, apart from the difficulties caused by the high level of debt, the continuous unpredictability of the climate, the still-high birth rate and growing unemployment (already as high as 20 per cent in urban areas), two major problems would have to be overcome:

(a) The first has to do with the functioning of public administration, where a persistence of centralized practices and the lack of an integrated approach, as well as inadequate ordering of priorities, policy formulation and implementation, as well as inadequate communication and coordination, detract from the impact of activities undertaken. For example, despite a marked increase in education spending, the rate of school enrolment among girls aged from 7 to 12 in rural areas is only 26 per cent and the literacy rate among women is only 11 per cent. Also, as far as health care is concerned, the limited capacity to absorb external assistance has a serious impact on the aid mobilization potential in this field.

(b) The second problem is connected to degradation of natural resources, the causes of which include soil erosion, deforestation and overgrazing. The scale of this deterioration is due to the weakness of the institutional, legal and financial framework in the area of natural-resource management, which reflects the lack of an integrated approach. Pockets of absolute poverty,

mostly in rural areas, often coincide with ecologically high-risk areas such as mountains and arid zones. Recurring droughts add to the vulnerability of the inhabitants, whose struggle to survive increases the fragility of their environment.

B. Strategies and policies for sustainable human development

3. The preparatory document for the national five-year development plan 1996-2000 clearly states that the overall strategic goal consists of strong economic growth, essentially export-led, and a rapid improvement in the level of human development, centred on the fight against poverty. In the area of sustainable human development, the Government adopted a social development strategy in 1993, with the help of bodies such as UNDP and the World Bank. It is based on the following key goals: (a) improved access to basic social services for disadvantaged population groups; (b) increased employment opportunities and incomes for those groups; and (c) strengthened social assistance and protection programmes.

4. This strategy is essentially implemented as a series of priority programmes. The first of these, the social priorities programme (barnamaj al-aoulaouiyat al-ijtimaiya (BAJ1)) is made up of the following major components: (a) basic schooling and literacy; (b) basic health care; (c) employment through the national advancement programme (a series of labour-intensive projects); and (d) follow-up and evaluation. The completion of this current programme is expected to take five years, and the financing of its $260 million budget, of which $150 million will be provided by the World Bank, is due to begin in the financial year 1996/97. The programme targets the 13 provinces considered to be the poorest. The efforts contained in the BAJ1 programme will be reinforced by field activities to be launched by various donors involved in areas almost all of which lie within the 13 provinces covered by BAJ1.

5. In promoting the fight against poverty, the Government is also implementing actions in which UNDP, being involved in most of them to varying degrees, can find a framework for cooperation which coincides perfectly with its new mandate. These include not only large-scale sectoral rural-development programmes but also governance and environment policies. For example, the national decentralized rural electrification programme is expected to serve 12 million inhabitants by 2010. UNDP has supported the preparation and mobilization of resources for the implementation of the rural community drinking water supply programme (PAGER), which is due to equip 31,000 localities in eight years, serving 11 million people. Finally, the national programme for the construction of 10,000 kilometres of rural roads by 2004, intended to open up areas where access roads are currently non-existent or in very poor condition, will directly affect 6 million inhabitants.

6. In the area of governance, the very recent legislative text which establishes procedures for the functioning of regional administration under the constitutional reform of 1996, as a space and institutional framework for the promotion of regional development policies, provides UNDP with a propitious framework for cooperation in the effective establishment of principles of

decentralization and participation by local communities, thereby continuing its cooperative efforts for the modernization of public administration.

7. In the environmental field, a series of important institutional, regulatory and technical activities are under way to improve environmental management, including implementation of the national environment strategy. Priority programmes arising out of the objectives identified in that strategy will be developed under the national environmental action plan, which is also being prepared with UNDP support (Capacity 21 programme).

II. RESULTS AND LESSONS OF PAST COOPERATION

8. The major impact of the activities of UNDP in Morocco, despite its small share in the overall volume of foreign aid, results from its efficient contribution to strengthening the nation's belief in the need to ensure sufficient awareness of the phenomenon of poverty and to consider the integration of women and the participation of civil society in development as necessary conditions for the success of any anti-poverty programme. Thus, the draft economic and social development plan 1996-2000 not only incorporates the fight against poverty as a national priority for the first time in an official document of the plan, but also adopts an approach to development based on the paradigm of sustainable human development. This impact also results from studies and surveys undertaken and/or supported by UNDP, which have provided the Government with a valuable tool for synthesis and analysis at an important stage in its programming. They have also succeeded in providing some early input to the thought processes which led to the elaboration of the sustainable development strategy. The process of strengthening the capacities of the Government, with UNDP support, has led to the elaboration of several important documents (strategies, policies and programmes), thereby contributing to the strengthening of partnership between the Government and civil society.

9. On the basis of conclusions and experience from the fifth cycle, future programming will be based upon: (a) consensus, at all levels of Moroccan society, concerning the priority to be given to the fight against poverty; (b) recognition of the need for the social development strategy to be complemented by a national anti-poverty plan in order to strengthen the effectiveness of sectoral policies; (c) shared experience and ideas in the field of participatory development; (d) confirmation of the principle of government "ownership" in respect of programmes undertaken, through systematic application of the principle of shared cost and of the "national execution" approach; (e) the need to strengthen the Government's abilities in the area of interministerial coordination and external aid; and (f) strengthening the resident coordinator system, in order to improve coordination and complementarity among donors, particularly organizations of the United Nations system.

III. PROPOSED STRATEGY

10. In the light of the country priorities set out in the country strategy note and the new mandate of UNDP, the Government considers that the main goal of UNDP

cooperation with Morocco, in addition to capacity-building, should be the fight against poverty. Consequently, programmes planned for the coming years should contribute to: (a) promoting the environment needed for reducing poverty in Morocco; (b) achieving, within the deadlines determined by the Government, the expected progress in the fight against poverty for the next five years; and (c) overcoming the constraints identified in section I regarding the low efficiency of public administration and the deterioration in the ecological balances.

11. Taking account of national priorities, of the relative advantages for UNDP in Morocco, and of the experience gained during the previous cycle, it is proposed that an overall cooperation strategy should be set in motion, along the following lines:

(a) Upstream, policies to combat poverty need to be strengthened, which requires enhancing the capacities of all the actors, including Government and civil society, involved in defining and implementing those policies. That strengthening will include the elaboration of integrated strategies and action plans, as well as effective mechanisms for: (i) intersectoral coordination in the fight against poverty; (ii) mobilization and management of the necessary resources; (iii) capacity-building at the national and local levels; and (iv) advocacy and awareness-raising activities.

(b) Downstream, these policies need to be validated in the short term through pilot actions intended to test them and to demonstrate their effectiveness in areas severely affected by poverty. The impact of these actions on the ability of the poor to provide for themselves and on their degree of vulnerability will make it possible to determine little by little the necessary adjustments for the extension of these policies to the 13 priority provinces under BAJ1 and to the northern provinces. This new view of development will be reflected, at the province and commune levels, in an integrated, decentralized and intersectoral approach in poor rural and peri-urban areas. Thus, the proposed strategy will provide an appropriate framework for the application, at the region, province and commune levels, of national policies in the areas of governance, employment, sustainable livelihoods (promotion of micro-credit), education of the girl child, promotion of the role of women in development and environmental protection. In that way, each priority area identified in the context of UNDP cooperation will deal with these different areas of interest, contributing in an intersectoral way to the promotion of sustainable human development in Morocco.

IV. PROPOSED THEMATIC AREAS

A. National capacity-building for the promotion of a favourable environment for the fight against poverty and generation of sustainable livelihoods

The fight against poverty in priority rural areas

12. Upstream, this programme will attempt in particular to achieve better coordination among strategies and policies which are already being elaborated or

implemented, in order to enhance the synergy initiated by the Government in the sustainable development strategy around the priority themes of employment, basic health care, education of the girl child in rural areas, the advancement of women, food security and the environment. The elaboration of a national plan of action against poverty and an annual national report on human development will also be among the important activities under this programme.

13. Downstream, with a view to extending UNDP activities to disadvantaged and isolated areas, the programme provides for the elaboration of provincial action plans against poverty and for contributing to their implementation in 4 of the 13 provinces covered by BAJ1. This decentralization goal will be accompanied by national capacity-building, at the local government level and at the level of non-governmental organizations and other partners involved. In each of those four provinces, at least three other donors are involved whose field work provides an opportunity for cooperation: the European Union, the organizations belonging to the Joint Consultative Group on Policy, with which joint programming has been proposed, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The anti-poverty programme in urban and peri-urban areas

14. The main objectives of this programme, which will be directed at three pilot areas selected in major urban and peri-urban concentrations, may be summed up as follows: (a) establishing an environment conducive to poverty alleviation; (b) providing disadvantaged population groups with more effective access to basic social services; (c) making habitable housing more readily accessible; (d) enhancing participation by these groups in economic activity by, inter alia, promoting micro-financing; and (e) strengthening social protection for people in vulnerable categories. In terms of its design and implementation, this programme is similar to an earlier one aimed at the same objectives in rural areas; however, indicators specific to urban settings will be developed for evaluation purposes. In some respects this programme will be designed to strengthen and supplement the actions of other organizations of the United Nations system already working in this field.

Support for the sustainable human development programme in the isolated northern provinces

15. Northern Morocco, where approximately 20 per cent of the country's inhabitants live, is a mountainous, isolated region which benefited least from the economic growth of the 1980s and was hardest hit by the recession that has been taking place since 1990. This explains why there are many pockets of poverty in that region, and why it is characterized by high out-migration and emigration rates. Out-migration and emigration are also stimulated by the region's high population density and, in the case of some families, the growing of unlawful crops, an activity that makes their lives more precarious than ever. The Government has shown that it is determined to correct this situation not only by establishing the Agency for the Northern Provinces and issuing urgent appeals for international cooperation, but also by announcing plans for the construction of an access road along the coast with a view to relieving the isolation of the region. Here again, this programme is similar to earlier programmes which have been implemented in provinces identified as deserving

priority, including the northern provinces, and which will be useful as a guide for extending the experiment to other provinces in the region. The programme's expected impact and evaluation are virtually the same as in the case of its predecessor. Action aimed at benefiting the north is beginning to assume significant proportions, and this will unquestionably enhance the programme's expected impact and help to mobilize other donors.

B. Environmental protection, natural resource management and promotion of renewable and alternative energy sources

Integration of the environment into development action and promotion of alternative energy sources

16. This programme, which will bolster the implementation of key subprogrammes identified as having priority in the national environmental action plan, will be structured primarily around the two themes of energy and the environment and population and the environment. It will feature, in particular, action relating to rational energy use, fuelwood demand management, and encouragement of the use of renewable energy sources. Concurrently, support will also be provided for supplementary actions relating to biogas production from household waste, the establishment of a microproject funding facility, and the Essaouira monograph. This programme will also be aimed at strengthening the country's ability to meet its obligations and commitments under global compacts.

17. This programme may be expected to lead to more efficient use of existing energy sources and the creation of conditions conducive to greater use of renewable energy sources. The fact that this programme is characterized by a large measure of convergence with programmes developed by other donors, including the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, the European Union and the Caisse française de développement will naturally tend to foster joint action.

The creation of conditions conducive to partnership and to the involvement of civil society in environmental protection

18. This programme will comprise two main components: (a) ecology-related sensitization, education and communication campaigns, aimed at economically productive persons, elected officials and the general population (with particular emphasis on women and children) and designed to integrate environmental aspects into development and change people's behaviour vis-à-vis their environment, and (b) trials with and subsequent implementation of practical actions to organize users (including women) and turn them into active participants and stakeholders in the management of their living space and natural resources.

19. The above-mentioned actions will, as far as possible, be carried out in provinces selected for the implementation of anti-poverty programmes. It is hoped that this programme will contribute to the emergence of a culture and of decision-making processes that take the environmental aspect more fully into account.

Support for the implementation of the PAGER programme and the institutional and organizational reforms contemplated in the Water Act

20. The first phase of this programme, which concerns implementation of the rural community drinking water supply programme (PAGER), will consist in (a) developing a participatory approach to drinking water supply in rural areas, essentially by enhancing the capacities of the partners involved in the implementation of PAGER through the provision of training in enablement and sensitization techniques, and (b) strengthening supply-system management and maintenance techniques by promoting small local enterprises, and by enhancing the capacities of the PAGER partners.

21. The second phase of this programme will contribute to implementation of the recent institutional and organizational reforms laid down in the new Water Act through (a) development of a communication strategy to publicize the provisions of the Water Act and efforts to encourage participation by all stakeholders, and (b) enhancement of the capacities of senior personnel in drainage basin agencies.

22. Evaluation of the impact of this programme can be based on a number of relevant BAJ1 indicators such as infant mortality, maternal mortality, neonatal mortality, school attendance rates among girls, and dropout rates among girls attending school. In view of the interest that various donors have shown in contributing to the implementation of the PAGER programme and the fact that UNDP cooperates with several of them (the European Union, the Caisse française de développement, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency and the World Bank), joint cooperation may be feasible, both in the context of the PAGER programme and in the context of the second phase of the programme here under discussion, in which French cooperation agencies have shown interest and in connection with which the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is already undertaking supplementary actions.

C. Programme to modernize public administration and governance

23. The cooperation of UNDP in the context of the administrative reform currently under way constitutes an appropriate framework for continued assistance for development of the indigenous skills needed to formulate, implement and evaluate a comprehensive administrative modernization policy. That cooperation might well take the form of support for the implementation of the prospective comprehensive plan of action in the area in question, especially with respect to decentralization, the flow of information within the Government, and the strengthening of skills in communication and in human resource management and development.

24. In addition, given this context and against a backdrop of pilot projects that are to be implemented, insofar as possible, in provinces targeted for anti-poverty programmes, UNDP will be in a position to support initiatives aimed, inter alia, at (a) providing elected officials and local authorities with appropriate training in modern management techniques and aids to decision-making; (b) codifying and simplifying the statutory instruments currently in force in the field of decentralization, and fleshing out the Municipal Charter

of 1976 with regulations designed to give more practical expression to the principles enshrined in it; (c) promoting a participation mentality among local authorities, enabling them to evolve in the direction of facilitating and encouraging local development; (d) enhancing the prerogatives and independence of local communities, especially through ex post facto monitoring; (e) making the necessary changes in connection with skills distribution on the one hand and budget management on the other, with a view to achieving greater effectiveness in decision-making and execution. It will also be relevant for UNDP to provide, under the 20:20 initiative, support for the preparation of a study aimed at evaluating, in cost/benefit terms, the effectiveness of expenditures for basic social services and measuring their impact on social indicators; (f) promoting the Regional Council as the body to coordinate and harmonize the objectives contained in local plans with the national development plan; and (g) ensuring that foreign aid is better coordinated.

25. This programme, which is expected to contribute to expediting modernization of the Government, has aroused interest among some donors, including in particular the French cooperation agencies, which are already working with UNDP in that area.

V. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Execution and implementation

26. The "national execution" approach that yielded such satisfactory results during the fifth cycle will be continued and strengthened, especially at the provincial and local levels, with the participation of partners and civil society. Particular attention will be paid to the use of other approaches, namely technical cooperation among developing countries, transfer of know-how through expatriate nationals, and United Nations Volunteers.

Monitoring and review

27. The first country cooperation framework for Morocco will give rise, as far as possible, to a yearly appraisal, which will be extended to other partners, and to a mid-point evaluation designed to assess the impact of the various programmes and determine what lessons can be drawn from their implementation. Concurrently, action will be taken to institute a mechanism to monitor and review sustainable human development. This will afford a means of tracking the evolving poverty situation in Morocco and assessing the impact of programmes in the field of sustainable human development.

Internal resource mobilization

28. Upstream, by means of (a) systematic cost-sharing, amounting to at least 50 per cent of the costs associated with the various programmes implemented, and (b) support for the Government's efforts to rationalize and enhance the efficiency of public expenditures and to refine existing development mechanisms and funds; downstream, by developing and applying on a trial basis funding formulas based on partnership and effective financial contributions both from

the private sector and civil society generally and from the communities affected by development in the field.

External resource mobilization

29. The UNDP Bureau will make a sustained effort to mobilize resources from the various funds and supplementary financing modalities managed by UNDP. Moreover, the adoption of the programme approach will generate a favourable context for the mobilization of resources from other donors, including both bilateral and United Nations system sources, and will help to promote the integration and coordination of actions undertaken. Lastly, action plans emerging from anti-poverty programmes in rural and urban areas will be used to organize meetings of donors.

Annex

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION TARGET TABLE FOR MOROCCO (1997-2001)

(In thousands of United States dollars)

Source	Amount	Comments
UNDP CORE FUNDS		
Estimated IPF carry-over	2 169	
TRAC 1.1.1	6 155	Assigned immediately to country.
TRAC 1.1.2	0 to 66.7 per cent of TRAC 1.1.1	This range of percentages is presented for initial planning purposes only. The actual assignment will depend on the availability of high-quality programmes. Any increase in the range of percentages would also be subject to availability of resources.
SPPD/STS	545	
Subtotal	8 869[a]	
NON-CORE FUNDS		
Government cost-sharing	7 400	
Sustainable development funds	1 400 comprising	
GEF	900	
Montreal Protocol	500	
Third-party cost-sharing	100	
Funds, trust funds and other	400 comprising	
UNIFEM	200	
UNV	200	
Subtotal	9 300	
GRAND TOTAL	18 169[a]	

[a] Not inclusive of TRAC 1.1.2, which is allocated regionally for subsequent country application.

Abbreviations: GEF = Global Environment Facility; IPF = indicative planning figure; SPPD = support for policy and programme development; STS = support for technical services; TRAC = target for resource assignment from the core; UNIFEM = United Nations Development Fund for Women; and UNV = United Nations Volunteers programme.